DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 426 982 SP 038 280

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TITLE Assessment of Intern's Performance: A Key To Enhance School Leader Preparation Programs.
PUB DATE 1998-08-07
NOTE 28p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (52nd, Juneau, AK, August 3-7, 1998).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Attitudes; *Administrator Education; Elementary Secondary Education; Field Experience Programs; Higher Education; *Internship Programs; *Leadership Qualities; Principals; *Student Evaluation

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the assessment of interns' performance in a university-based internship program. A group of 46 school administrators (mainly principals) who supervised interns in a variety of school settings as part of a university-based school leader preparation program completed the Assessment of Interns' Performance form. The assessment was designed to gather information about interns' experiences, field-based areas in which interns were involved, their potential as future administrators, their strengths and areas for further development, and recommendations for program enhancement. Results indicated that interns were placed in different positions and levels, with more than half placed as administrative assistants. Interns engaged in a variety of activities. Their field supervisors had high regard for them. Areas of demonstrated strength and ability included effective planning, organization, time management, human relations, oral communication, written communication, taking directions, using organization policies and procedures, and applying theory in educational administration. The supervisors believed the interns had the potential to perform a variety of roles at both central office and campus levels. Areas for further development included improved communication between university and school districts, longer internships, periodic assessments, and a balance between predetermined activities and flexibility to engage in other areas as well as between theory and practice. Supervisors were generally willing to continue supporting other interns. (Contains 23 references.) (SM)

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Assessment of Intern's Performance: A Key to Enhance School Leader Preparation Programs

ED 426 982

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Paper presented at the 52nd Annual Conference of the
National Council of Professors of Educational Administration
Juneau, Alaska
August 3-7, 1998

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Introduction

The value of learning through field or clinical experiences has been widely recognized in the field of educational administration preparation (Daresh, 1987; Anderson, 1988; Milstein, 1990; Ovando, 1990; Bradly, 1991; Richardson, 1992; Björk & Ginsberg, 1995). Most preparation programs include some format that provides students with an opportunity to relate theory to practice in diverse settings, because "intellectual knowledge, in and of itself is not enough" (Milstein, et al., 1991, p. 5). However, the assessment of such experiences for the purpose of program enhancement remains to be a concern. Additionally, as Bradly points out, "while all agree on the value of field experiences, many say clinical training should be redesigned"(1991, 17) to achieve a quality preparation program.

Quality preparation of school leaders requires "a balance between learning about and learning how, rooted in a solid foundation of learning why. In the process, students should have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of those skills and knowledge traditionally required of administrative positions as well as those which have not yet been clearly identified but which may be required in the future" (Milstein, 1990, p. 122). The internship has become the most common strategy to achieve such a balance in the field of educational administrator preparation; however, questions relative to its merit continue to be raised.

Thus, it becomes imperative that we evaluate the internship experience and interns' performance for the purpose of generating feedback for the individual and the preparation institution. As Milstein, et al. (1991) remind us, "Evaluation lets us know how close we have come to meeting our purposes and provides information needed to make decisions that can improve our performance. As such, it is an important aspect of the planning and management of internship programs" (p. 101). Therefore, assessment of interns' performance by their field supervisors may provide meaningful feedback to both the intern and the preparation program.

An intern's performance assessment can be conducted at different points of his or her preparation program to generate specific information for continuous improvement purposes. Promising methodological approaches

include "document analysis, interviews, observations, and questionnaires" (Milstein, et al., 1991, p.112). The Assessment of Interns' Performance, a questionnairre that has been used in a preparation program with the collaboration of field supervisors (site administrators) has the potential to highlight the intern's strengths and needs for further development as well as to generate meaningful feedback for preparation programs.

The remainder of this paper describes the process and results of a study using content analysis (Krippendorff, 1980) of the Assessment of Interns' Performance completed by school administrators who supervise interns in a variety of school settings as part of a university-based school leader preparation program. The purpose of such assessment was to gather information about the interns' experiences, the field based areas in which interns are involved, their potential as future administrators, their strengths and areas for further development, and recommendations for program enhancement.

The Internship as a Field-Based Experience

School leader preparation programs face the challenge of responding to calls for excellence. Similarly, these programs "face mandates for change as a result of national, state and local policies that demand institutional reform and accountability" (Morgan, et al., 1997, p. 3). Consequently, preparation institutions, namely universities, are in search of effective field based learnings and experiences to equip prospective school leaders with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to better serve all students.

The clinical experience or field-based learning commonly referred to as internship is not new in the field of education preparation programs. However, a renewed emphasis on field based learning suggests that the school leader's internship may satisfy new standards (Morgan. et al., 1997). On the other hand, Short & Price remind us that "concern about the role of the clinical experience in administrative preaparation appeared as early as the late 1940s." (1992, p. 4). Since then, the internship has been the focus of much debate, discussion and reform. For instance, according to Campbell (1987), early internship arrangements were similar to student teaching experiences as a field study

mechanism. This was later modified to differentiate preparation programs for school administrators from teacher preparation programs. The initial purpose of the modified internship was "to apply content, presumably taught and learned in the classroom, to a field experience jointly supervised by college-based faculty and senior practitioners" (Morgan, et al., 1997, p. 4).

While only two universities (the University of Chicago and the University of Omaha) had an internship requirement by the end of the 1940's, interest in clinical experiences expanded and gained support from the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration which later became the University Council of Educational Administration-UCEA (Milstein, et al., 1991). During the 1950s, several universities embraced and advanced the internship as a result of support from the Kellogg Foundation. By the 1960's, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) expressed strong support for the clinical experience through the AASA Yearbook by stating that "the internship is so important that it is the *sine qua non* of a modern program of preparation of educational administrators. If an institution cannot provide internship training, it should not be in the business of preparing educational administrators" (AASA, 1960, p. 82). Further, it was reported that by 1962, at least 117 universities incorporated internships into their administrator preparation programs (Hencley, et al., 1963). As the number of universities embracing the internship concept increased, the need to develop guidelines to enhance the quality of internship experiences emerged. Hence, UCEA and AASA (1964) formed a task force to establish a set of principles that would guide universities in their efforts to conduct internships. The spirit of the guidelines emphasizes the need to balance the study of educational administration theory and the application of school administration competencies. The following guidelines (as cited in Short & Price, 1992) reflect the value of the internship experience:

> 1. Professional preparation programs for educational administrators should include both the study and the practice of school administration. The program should be designed and operated to help students develop concepts consistent with the realities of administration, and to help them learn how people, ideas, and materials are brought together through administrative processes for the effective operation of the school.

2. Opportunity for prospective administrators to apply concepts, understandings and skills in circumstances comparable to those in which they will work when they become administrators should be an integral part of the professional preparation program. In addition to establishing a record of academic achievement, prospective administrators should have opportunity in their preparation program to evaluate and further develop their own competencies by the application of their knowledge, skills, abilities, and concepts in actual practice.
3. The reality of school administration has many facets and each facet is rich in instructional potential. Comprehension of this reality is facilitated through a variety of experiences such as case studies, simulated situations, field observations, practicums, internships, and appointments to administrative positions on provisional status.
4. The internship is a significant way of participating in administration and facilitating self-actualization as an administrator. As the intern learns more about administration and about himself through practice, the meaning of administrator accountability comes to life.
5. The internship provides opportunity to learn through practice and to demonstrate competence in practice. As the program is planned in detail, full account should be taken not only of the intern's knowledge about administration, but also of his or her competence to practice it.
6. Local boards of education should be encouraged to share the cost of internships. It is reasonable to assume that many boards of education, as an investment in leadership, can pay interns at a rate equal to that which they might receive if placed on a teachers' salary schedule. The university should support the costs involved in initiation of the program, university supervision of interns, and evaluation.
7. Universities employing the internship in professional preparation programs should join together in assessing the effectiveness of the internship experience.
8. In combining the study and practice of school administration in preparation programs, use should be made of the total resources of the university, cooperating school districts, and other related educational agencies.

The above guidelines provided a foundation for the design of clinical experiences in several preparation programs. During the 1970's, learning through field experience was recognized as a promising instructional strategy for undergraduate programs in other fields as well. While there were various combinations in internship program descriptions, Duley found that there were at least seven broad educational goals. These goals were:

1. Put theory into practice, develop higher cognitive skills: learn how to to apply, integrate, and/or evaluate knowledge and/or the methodology of a discipline or a field.
2. Acquire knowledge: engage in research, analyze the organizational structures.
3. Acquire and develop specific skills: problem solving, interpersonal, group process, coping and/or psychomotor
4. Increase personal growth and development: increase self-understanding, self confidence, self-reliance, and/or clarify values.
5. Learn how to learn independently: develop the ability to use experiential learning theory or engage in cross-cultural learning.
6. Explore careers: develop self-understanding and acquire and use career exploration skills.
7. Become responsible citizens: develop a firsthand understanding of the political system. identify issues of concern, and develop the political and social action skills appropriate to citizenship (Duley, 1978, p. 315)

The 1980's witnessed an increase in the number of institutions which included an internship as an important component of school leader preparation programs. For instance, Skalski and associates (1987) report that at least 220 universities included some form of field-based learning experience in order to meet both university requirements and state certification requirements. However, as the number of universities requiring internships increased, great variations in format, nature, requirements, and timeframe became apparent, which in turn generated considerable criticism. For instance, Pitner observed that " the nature of the appropriate tasks of school administration and the proper setting for developing requisite skills remains the subject of considerable disagreement among clinical training advocates"(1988, p. 382). Similarly, others report that a number of preparation programs continued to be the focus of criticism "for not providing the field-based experiences necessary for developing outstanding principals" (Anderson, 1989, p. 56).

During the 1990's, internship appears to have gained legitimacy as a field-based learning experience. Currently, professional organizations such as UCEA and AASA as well as state certification bodies support the significance of the internship as an integral component of school leader preparation programs. However, questions about the quality and appropriateness of the internship experience have also emerged. As Milstein recognized:

> Too often field sites are chosen haphazardly and/or are not closely monitored. The potential for interns being constraint to passive observation, being placed in roles which do not fit closely with their career goals or being used as "go-fers," is great when clear and agreed upon expectations are not developed. Likewise, campus-based practicums and seminars on a regular basis are rarely available or required and clinical experiences are often isolated from the rest of a students' program flow. Finally, the connecting linkages between campus experiences and field-based experiences are rarely adequately developed. (1990, p. 121).

Consequently, to enhance the success of field-based learning experiences and to make clear connections between theory and practice, school leader preparation programs need to provide internships that are developed, implemented and evaluated with the participation of students, university faculty and successful school leaders. Emphasizing the need for planning, Milstein, et al. state that "when they (clinical experiences) are planned with care and when interns are given oppportunities to work with exceptional leaders, these clinical experiences can have a positive impact on interns' confidence and their ability to perform as leaders" (1991, p. 6). The value of collaboration between university faculty and school leaders is further supported by the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration which argues that:

> the logic of professional preparation, which introduces students to theory and research and then guides them into the world of practice, is well-suited for the important work of school administration. The necessary close working relationship between the university and the world of practice will benefit the quality of research and the quality of administrator preparation. In addition, public interests are served by the fact that administrators have studied school administration in the university and have been mentored by a team of research and clinical professors prior to independent practice (1987, p. 20).

Field supervisors (Site administrtors) play a key role in the internship process. They provide guidance and support as interns engage in a variety of administrative functions, and as they learn to lead schools (Ovando, 1990). During the internship, field supervisors (site administrators) have the opportunity to observe and interact with prospective school leaders in real

situations and diverse settings. Consequently, they have insight and information that is most valuable for both the intern and the preparation program. Further, input from field supervisors is valuable because they actually see how administrative interns interact with other professionals in the field, how they respond to problems, how they make decisions, and how they contribute to the education of children in diverse contexts. Thus, information generated through the assessment of interns' performance completed by field supervisors "provides the basis for decision making about the future, both for continuing development of individual interns and program graduates, and for modifications and changes that guarantee the continued integrity and relevance of the program itself" (Milstein, et al.,1991, p.116).

The literature suggests that in order for the internship to be an effective culminating experience, general administrative knowledge needs to be developed prior to placement of interns. In addition, a supportive mechanism should be in place so that interns have an opportunity for reflection, and continuous monitoring and assessment of skill application should be completed. (Milstein, et al., 1991, NASSAP, 1992, Balanoff et al., 1995). While there appears to exist some agreement about these substantive components of the internship, issues related to its purpose, nature, relevance of administrative experiential learning, supervision, financial support, prior preparation, timeframe, and evaluation (Murphy & Hallinger, 1987; Pitner, 1988; Griffiths, 1988; Short & Price, 1992; Morgan et al., 1997) continue to be debated.

Furthermore, Short and Price affirm that "little evaluative data exist regarding the impact of clinical experiences, particularly the internship, on students' subsequent administrative effectiveness and success. It is imperative that such an inquiry be initiated and findings disseminated to those responsible for administrator preparation" (1992, p. 7). Therefore, assessing interns' performance with the collaboration of field supervisors may constitute a significant step towards assuring a quality internship experience.

Methodology and Procedures

Evaluation of an internship which seeks to generate meaningful feedback for the intern and the preparation program can be accomplished at

different stages and using a variety of techniques. The purpose of this study was to determine the activities in which the interns were involved, overall performance ratings, the intern's role potential, the intern's areas of strengths and further development needs, as well recommendations to enhance the internship program. Therefore, this report is limited to data obtained at the end of the internship experience of a university-based preparation program. This section describes the internship program and the process followed to collect information.

The Internship Experience

The department of educational administration of a major public university located in central Texas embraced the belief that "the internship (as a field-based learning experience) is one of the most valuable components of the school leader preparation learning and certifying process. It provides prospective school leaders with an opportunity to link intellectual knowledge and competence with successful performance" (Balanoff, et al., 1995, p 2). Further, it seeks to "assure that students develop leadership skills required to create nurturing learning environments for all students (Balanoff, et al., 1995, p. 3). The purpose of this internship is three-fold. First, it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Apply theoretical knowledge, skills, and values learned during their graduate studies.
2. Engage in successful administrative and instructional leadership practices in diverse settings.
3. Develop a comprehensive understanding of educational leadership.
4. Enhance personal development, self-confidence, and value clarification.
5. Engage in shared decision-making, problem solving, and conflict resolution.
6. Develop professional interaction skills to work collaboratively with colleagues, faculty, staff, and parents.
7. Develop an understanding of the school community contexts of today's and tomorrow's schools.
8. Develop an understanding of an emerging heterogeneous population of students with varying cultural and linguistic distinctions.
9. Develop an understanding of the role of schools in addressing significant societal problems.

10. Develop linkages which will serve and support their leadership activities in schools.
11. Develop an understanding of schools as complex organizations.
12. Practice their profession under guidance and supervision of outstanding practitioners and distinguished university faculty.
13. Determine whether they have the true interest and competence to perform administrative roles.

Second, it is expected that school administrators will have opportunities to:

1. Have access to high quality administrative assistance for different educational projects.
2. Encourage involvement of high caliber teachers who have the potential to become excellent administrators.
3. Become familiar with innovations and research in educational administration.
4. Observe and evaluate the interns' performance in actual work situations prior to appointing them to administrative positions.
5. Have access to resources from one of the nation's premier research universities.

Finally, it is expected that the university faculty will have opportunities to:

1. Develop close collaborative relationships with schools.
2. Contribute to the education of all children through joint efforts.
3. Enhance their understanding of current issues, practices and innovations related to schooling.
4. Gear research towards real world school problems, issues and practices.
5. Develop potential resources for research and training which advances the profession. (Balanoff, et al., 1995, pp. 3-5).

Students interested in completing an administrative internship must have completed at least 30 hours of graduate studies: 12 hours in the first summer, 6 hours in the fall, 6 hours in the spring, and 6 hours in the second summer. By fulfilling the requirements of these graduate studies, students become competent in concepts and knowledge areas required for the complexity and demands of school leadership. The program covers key areas of school administration. These usually include foundations of school administration, organizational theory, social factors affecting education, special education,

school law, instructional supervision, personnel administration, teacher evaluation, and other related areas. Students also complete the required training and certification to perform certain specialized functions such as instructional leadership and teacher appraisal.

As students engage in internship experiences, they also enroll in a Reflective Seminar. This seminar is designed to bring together all students completing an internship, for the purpose of introspection and discourse. A faculty member facilitates this seminar and students are provided with opportunities to synthesize course work and field experiences. Selected administrative areas are revisited or expanded as needed to make sure students have a comprehensive grasp of school leadership. In addition, students are able to share concerns and learn from one another as well to give and recieve constructive feedback.

When these three major components are linked together (graduate studies, administrative internship, and reflective seminar), a three-dimensional foundation for school leader preparation emerges. Thus, it can be affirmed that theoretical knowledge, field experiences and reflection lead to school leader capacity. (See Exhibit # 1)

Insert Exhibit # 1

At the completion of the internship experience, the field supervisor (site administrator) evaluates the intern's performance completing the Assessment of Intern's Performance Form. The field supervisor "plays an essential role in the internship. In cooperation with the faculty advisor, the field supervisor formulates site-relevant program objectives, activities and duties, as well as general time lines for achieving these objectives (Balanoff, et al., 1995). Further, the field supervisor is expected to:

- Meet with the intern and the faculty advisor to review the intern's assignments and duties.
- Provide clear expectations for the intern's administrative and instructional leadership performance.

- Provide the intern with information about school policies, operational procedures and legal guidelines in order to facilitate his or her performance.
- Schedule periodic meetings with the intern for the purpose of reviewing progress, clarifying expectations, assigning new duties and providing meaningful feedback.
- Assign the intern appropriate office space and provide resources for the completion of other required activities and assignments.
- Link the intern to appropriate school or agency resources.
- Explain the internship to other school or agency pesonnel.
- Complete an assessment of the intern's performance at the end of the field experiences. (Balanoff, et al., 1995, p. 8)

The purpose of the assessment of intern's performance is to "make accurate judgments about the intern's ability to perform administrative and instructional leadership activities, to provide useful feedback to interns, to identify the potential of interns as future administrators, as well as to identify areas for further development" (Balanoff, et al., 1995, p. 8).

Once the form is received by the faculty supervisor, a meeting is scheduled with the intern for feedback purposes. Most students welcome the opportunity to review their assessment and usually agree with field supervisor comments. Finally the form is placed in the intern's file for future reference use when students request letters of recommendation.

Participants

This study included practicing administrators who performed the role of field supervisors. These administrators supervised interns in a variety of settings as part the university-based educational administrator preparation program over a period of 5 years, from 1992 tom 1997.

A total of 46 administrators completed the Assessment of Intern Performance Form at the completion of the internship experience. A majority (74%) of these administrators were principals, others were superintendents (7%), assistant superintendents (9%), coordinators of special programs (7%), and directors of special services (4%). Both central office and campus levels were represented. All three levels of schools (elementary, middle and high school) of schools were also represented.

Data sources and analysis

The Assessment of Intern's Performance Form used falls within the document and records category known as "nonhuman sources" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It was selected following the Milstein et al. (1991) selection criteria for accessibility, relevance, accuracy , economy of resources, and skill and time. Additionally, this assessment form was used because it is a stable, rich and non-reactive source of information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The assessment form included identification information such as intern name, internship position, field supervisor name and position, district, and school. It also included a list of areas of activities in which interns were involved, ranging from budgeting to special programs; an overall rating of intern's performance using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning outstanding performance and 5 meaning poor performance; a rating of interns' demonstrated ability in areas such as planning, organization, time management, human relations, communications, and others using a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning low ability and 5 meaning high ability. Additionally, open-ended questions requested field supervisors' perceptions of the interns' potential, strengths, areas for further development; suggestions for improvement; general comments and willingness to continue working with the program. These documents are valid sources of information because they "represent data that are thoughtful in that informants have given attention to completing", and therefore enabled the researcher to obtain the language and words of informants" (Cresswell, 1994, p. 151).

A total of 46 actual intern's assessment forms was analyzed. The researcher analyzed, sorted and coded the information contained in these forms using quantitative and qualitative procedures. Frequencies, percentages and means were computed to organize and analyze interns' positions, school districts, areas of involvement and interns' performance ratings. Data relative to interns' demonstrated ability was analyzed by computing the frequency of ratings by each respondent. Respondents assigned a rating using a scale raging from 1 to 5, with 1 labeled as "low" and 5 labeled as "high." The mean of rating for each ability was computed by multiplying the frequency total by its scaled value to produce a weighted rating, and all weighted ratings were added for each ability. The total sum of weighted ratings was divided by the number of

responses for each ability. Additionally, qualitative research guidelines for content analysis (Krippendorff, 1980) were followed in order to "isolate patterns and processes, commonalties and differences, and to gradually elaborate a set of generalizations" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.9).

Results

This section presents the findings of the content analysis of the Assessment of Interns Performance Form. It describes the interns' positions, school districts, areas of activities in which interns were involved, overall performance ratings, role potential, areas of strength, areas for further development, recommendations for enhancing the internship experience, additional comments, and willingness to continue providing internship opportunities.

Interns were placed in different positions and levels. More than half of the interns (54%) were placed as "administrative assistants." From these administrtgive interns, a majority (76%) were placed at campus levels (elementary, middle and high school), and only a few (24%) were placed at central office. On the other hand, less than half of the interns (28%) were placed as "assistant principals" at elementary and middle schools, and only a few (7%) were placed as elementary school "principals."

A total of fourteen school districts was represented. Some of these interns were located within geographical proximity to the university. However, the local urban independent school district placed a majority (30%) of the interns. Two other districts, one located about 30 miles south and the other one located about 45 miles north of the university, placed a few (11% & 13%) interns, while the other eleven districts located at further distances (50 to 100 miles) placed at least one to three interns.

According to the respondents, interns engage in a number of areas of activities. However, most of them (85%) engage in special programs such as Gifted and Talented, Chapter I, English as a Second Language, research projects, special education and others that focus on specific campus needs and priorities. More than half of the interns also (80%) engage in curriculum related activities and policy and regulations, and others (78%) engage in

instructional supervision. Instruction-related activities and school law appear to be areas with least involvement on the part of the interns (See Table # 1).

Field supervisors completing the assessment forms appear to have high regard for interns. A majority (67 %) of interns' overall performance was rated as "outstanding." Less than half (28 %) of the interns' overall performance was rated as "above average," and the overall performance of very few (4 %) was rated as "average." (See Table #2).

Areas of interns' demonstrated ability included in this study were effective planning, organization, time management, human relations, oral communications, written communication, taking directions, use of organization's policies and procedures, and application of theory in educational administration. Findings revealed that interns' demonstrated ability was highly rated in all of these areas, as can be observed in Table # 3.

The assessment of intern's performance also asked field supervisors to identify the intern's potential for future administrative practice. Apparently, interns have potential to perform a variety of roles. Data revealed that interns have potential to perform both central office and campus level roles. The following roles emerged at central level: coordinator of a variety of programs (20%), instructional supervisor (17%), resource manager (7%), superintendent (2%) and assistant superintendent (2%). On the other hand, the following roles emerged at campus level: principal or instructional leader (26%), assistant principal (26%), student discipline manager (7%), student, teacher, and parent mediator (9%). Three additional roles that emerged were researcher (11%), planner (13%), and organizer (9%), as it can be observed in Table # 4.

Field supervisors indicated that interns have several strengths. From these, interpersonal skills (50%), and organization (43%) emerged as the most common. Other strengths included comprehensive knowledge (26%), communication, both oral and written (13%), creativity (13%), self-motivation (11%), task orientation (11%), cooperation (9%), sense of humor (7%), and student-centeredness (7%). Additionally, at least one field supervisor identified problem solution, conceptualization, bilingual, work ethics, common sense and willingness as additional strengths.

On the other hand, field supervisors identified specific areas for interns' further development. The following emerged as areas of need: additional

experience (24%), budgeting (17%), personnel management (15%), physical plant management (7%), curriculum knowledge (7%), discipline management (4%), time management (4%), assertiveness (4%), ability to handle multiple responsibilities simultaneously (4%), and district knowledge (4%). Additionally, at least one field supervisor identified program design, delegation, problem solving, objectivity, scheduling, initiative, and development of a bank of ideas as areas of need.

Field supervisors made specific suggestions to enhance the internship experience. The following areas of improvement emerged from the data:

Communication. According to the respondents, the internship experience can be enhanced by increasing the level of communication between the university and the schools districts. Specifically, more communication between the faculty advisor and the campus administrator is needed to clarify expectations and outcomes. The following field supervisor comments support the need for clearer communication:

> "Provide information in an orientation conference that involves the intern, principal, and university supervisor for a better overall understanding of program outcomes."
>
> "Provide more opportunities to discuss this assessment."
>
> " More communication between university faculty and campus supervisor would strengthen the program."

Length of Internship. Respondents' comments suggest that one semester internships are limiting and may not necessarily provide interns with the amount of time required to develop a comprehensive understanding of school leadership and to have more practical experience. As a field supervisor said, "I believe a whole year along with course work would allow the intern to see the whole picture. This is necessary before assuming responsibilities for a school." Another field supervisor expressed the need for additional time as follows: "This internship experience was short lived. It would be my recommendation that an internship should consist of a full year program to allow the prospective administrator to experience the interactions of running a school with the community and Central Administration. (PTA, partners in

education, school board, special programs, special education, counseling, library, food service, transportation, maintenance, technology, health services, housekeeping, media services, printing services, staff development, textbooks and finance)."

Assessment and feedback. Periodic formative evaluations or assessments emerged as an important tool. According to these field supervisors, collecting information about the actual accomplishments of interns may provide relevant information to highlight the benefits for the participating schools and to improve the role of the field supervisor in assisting the intern. As a field supervisor expressed, "A summary of the internships over recent years, and what these interns accomplished for the cooperating agency, should be provided." Another one expressed this need raising the following question: "Is there a way for your program to give feedback to us regarding adjustments or improvements we (I) should make in assisting/leading the intern through the process?"

Balance. Field supervisors believe that there is a need to create a balance between predetermined activities and flexibility to engage in other areas, as well as between theory and practice. As one field supervisor commented, "Continue the balance that exists between faculty supervisors contacts and the freedom to explore the campus experience." Another one said, "Do not allow them (interns) to take too many courses while completing their internship." Similarly, a field supervisor said, "Program needs balance between theory and practice. I still believe your program is very theory oriented and perhaps there could be a better balance to what actually goes on in the field."

The additional comments provided by the field supervisors fell within two main categories: the internship program and the intern. The following comments related to the program reflect field supervisors' satisfaction:

"The university is doing a good job of placement and follow-up."

"The internship relationship between the university and the school district was excellent."

"Working with the intern and the university internship program has been a most rewarding experience for me, and I trust for the intern as well."

"The internship experience is outstanding. The best way to learn is on the job. Keep a balance between theory and practice."
"The internship program is excellent preparation for the awesome responsibility of managing a school effectively."
"We have had an excellent experience with the Department of Educational Administration, and hope to continue a placement of interns."
"It has been a pleasure to work with program --support and cooperation from university was always available."

Field supervisors comments about the the interns and their contributions to the school were generally positive. The following statements reflect their impressions:

"Continue to provide excellent caliber of interns to the profession through proper screening."
"Intern was an outstanding intern and will make a fantastic principal. The district needs to keep her."
"Intern has become an asset and has become a very valuable part of the staff."
"Intern is a very skilled/practical future administrator."
"Intern was an asset to the high school."
"There is an amazing difference from the time the intern arrives to when he or she leaves. The growth is very rewarding. The intern spends the first three months in shock because of so many different aspects in one job. I realize this can only be learned on the job."
"The intern was outstanding. Please send me more just like her."
"The intern is an exceptional professional. She has provided an invaluable service to the American Institute of Learning."

Finally, respondents were asked whether or not they would be interested in continuing to provide opportunities for other interns. A majority of the field supervisors (93%) responded affirmatively, indicating that "yes" they would be willing to work with other interns, and very few (7%) were doubtful.

Concluding statement

This paper focused on the assessment of interns' performance in a university-based internship program. While internships have gained legitimazy as field based experiences, new concerns and questions have emerged, creating a need to generate information for the purpose of providing feedback to interns as well as preparation programs. Following qualitative research guidelines, this study utilized interns' assessment forms completed by 46 field supervisor in order to determine the activities in which the interns were involved, overall performance ratings, intern's role potential, intern's areas of strengths and further development needs, as well recommendations to enhance the internship program.

Findings suggest that the internship enhances interns' awarness level relative to the demands and complexity of school leadership in diverse settings. Interns are usually involved in special programs that tend to address campus specific needs and priorities. Interns' overall performance is highly regarded and appreciated. Interns demonstrate ability to take directions, organize, plan and use human relations. While Interns exhibit potential to perform several administrative roles at both campus and central office levels, they are clearly prepared to become principals and assistant principals. Further, findings suggest that interns are very strong in interpersonal skills and organization. On the other hand interns need additional experience and further development in management areas such as budgeting, personnel, and physical plant.

Enhancement of the internship program requires clear communication between the university and the cooperating school district, as well as clarification of expectations; a longer timeframe, continuous assessment and feedback for the intern, the campus administrator and the university as well; a better balance between theory and practice; and greater flexibility so that the intern can be involved in a variety of innovative programs.

While this report is limited to one source of information, it can be asserted that the content analysis of assessment forms completed by campus supervisors is a promising vehicle to generate information that can be used to enhance the quality of the internship program and the interns' experiences. Further, the assessment forms also have potential as a source of future

references when students apply for administrative positions. Therefore, those in charge of internship programs should review the assessment practices in place, and select the most effective means to generate constructive feedback at different times during the life of the internship because assessment of intern's performance can be a key to enhance school leader preparation programs.

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Table # 1
Interns' areas of activities

Areas	# of Interns	Percentage
Special programs	39	85
Curriculum	37	80
Policies and regulations	37	80
Instructional supervision	36	78
Personnel	35	76
Community relations	35	76
Student services	34	74
Budgeting	34	74
Predictions and projections	30	65
Records	30	65
Parent programs	30	65
Instruction	29	63
School law	26	57

Note: Total percentage is higher than 100 because respondents checked all that applied.

Table # 2
Intern's Overall Rating

Rating	# of Interns	Percentage
Outstanding	31	67
Above average	13	28
Average	2	4
Below average	---	---
Poor	---	---

Table # 3
Innterns' Demostrated Ability Rating

Ability	Ratings 5	4	3	2	1	Total Responses	Mean Rating
Effective planning	155	48	9			46	4.61
Organization	160	48	6			46	4.65
Time management	135	60	12			46	4.33
Human relations	160	40	12			46	4.61
Oral communication	145	52	12			46	4.54
Written commun.	145	60	12			46	4.59
Taking directions	190	28	3			46	4.80
Use of organization's policies & procedures	150	42	6			46	4.22
Application of theory in educational admin.	140	60	9			46	4.41

Table # 4
Interns' Potential Roles

Roles	Number	Percentage
Central office level		
Coordinator	9	20
Instructional supervisor	8	17
Resource manager	3	7
Superintendent	1	2
Assistant superintendent	1	2
Facilitator of Staff Dev.	1	2
Campus level		
Principal	12	27
Assistant Principal	12	27
Student Disc. manager	3	7
Mediator (st.,teach.,parent)	3	7
Other		
Planner	6	13
Researcher	4	9
Organizer	4	9

Note: Total is more than 100 percent because field supervisors indicated more than one role.

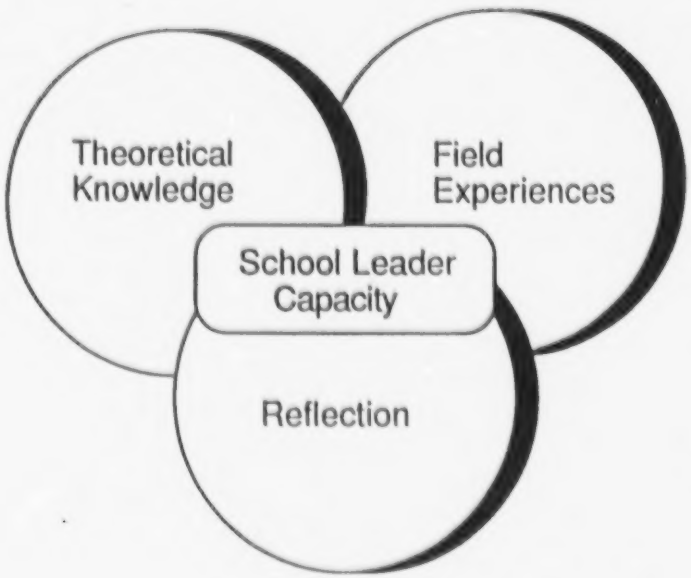

Exhibit # 1: Three-Dimensional Foundation of School Leadership Capacity